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Draft:Metapsammite

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Metapsammite is a metamorphic rock that also called *metasandstone* are often nondescript. Normal sandstones are mostly quartz, perhaps with some feldspar. When metamorphosed, they still contain quartz and feldspar because these minerals are stable at all metamorphic grades. At low grades, metapsammites typically appear massive and homogeneous, containing light-colored quartz and feldspar grains. The rock seen here (Figure 1.1) is an example. Sometimes

small micas and other dark minerals may be scattered evenly throughout.

At higher grades metapsammite may recrystallize with quartz grains growing together and becoming coarser. This produces a quartzite, a hard, nonfoliated metamorphic rock. In quartzites, the once separate quartz crystals become massive quartz with no visible grain boundaries. As this happens, original sedimentary textures are obliterated. Pure quartzites are generally white or light colored (like the one in Figure 8.49) but iron staining often adds a red or pinkish coloration. Figure 8.37, earlier in this chapter, shows another example of an unremarkable quartzite.

So, many metasandstones have unexciting mineralogy, but if the original sandstone contained some clay, any of the minerals that can be in metapelites may be present. For example, the greenish quartzite seen below (Figure 8.50) contains disseminated green chlorite. And the kyanite quartzite in Figure 8.51 contains conspicuous blades of blue kyanite. Quartz usually dominates, and the amounts of other minerals depend on how much clay was in the protolith. Foliation, typical of metapelitic rocks, is usually lacking in these rocks because micas are generally absent.

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